

# **Expanding Housing Options for Persons with Disabilities: *Housing Advocacy for CILs***

## ***COURSE SYLLABUS***

**Prepared by:**

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# **IL-NET**

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**CIL-NET · SILC-NET**

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## Table of Contents

Important Contact Information .....	1
IL-NET Online Courses – How They Work .....	2
Course Description and Overview .....	4
Course Calendar.....	7
Course Assignments.....	8

## Important Contact Information

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If you have questions about the specific course content contact the instructors.

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If you have questions about course registration, payment issues, or receiving course material in an alternate format, please contact Dawn Heinsohn.

## IL-NET Online Courses – How They Work

“Going to class” online is easy! Here’s how it works.

1. Attend the course orientation telephone conference the week before your class starts.
2. You will receive an email from Instructure Canvas ([notifications@instructure.com](mailto:notifications@instructure.com)), if you don’t receive the email make sure to check your spam or junk email folders, if you can’t find the email please contact one of the technical support staff. It is an email inviting you to participate in the online class; if this is your first online class in Canvas you’ll need to register with Canvas before you can participate in the class. Click on the link provided in the email from Instructure Canvas to register with Canvas. Once you register with Canvas it will take you to the log-in page. The Web address is <http://elearn.usu.edu/canvas/> for the course log-in page. If you have already taken a class and registered with Canvas just click on the link in the email to accept the invitation and then you will be able to log-in using your email address and the password you created. If you forgot your password, click on the “Forgot Password?” link on the Canvas log-in page.
3. If you have trouble logging in contact us before the orientation call by using one of the numbers listed on the Important Contact Information sheet. If you cannot attend the orientation and need individual assistance please contact one of the course technical assistants before the course starts. An agenda of the topics to be covered during the orientation call is attached. Please login to the Canvas course prior to joining the teleconference, that way everyone will be ready to be oriented to the course.
4. Once you have attended the orientation call, log-in to the course homepage and download a copy of the manual.
5. Complete the pre-course survey before completing any of the assignments or reading anything on the discussion board.
6. Read the daily assignments that are included in the course manual. Answer the questions in the course manual. You may choose to write down your answers for yourself. Later, you will post answers to questions posted on the course discussion board for the instructor and classmates to read and comment on.
7. If applicable listen to any audio files or watch any video files associated with the assignments (Please note: Not all courses have audio or video files. If a course uses audio or video files the orientation call will include a section on how to use them).
8. Log on to the course website. Try to do this each day. Although an online course does not require students to be at their computers at a specific time

each day, in order to get the most out of an online course it is important to check in daily if at all possible. The flexibility of an online course allows you to log in any time of the day or night, but if you skip a few days at a time you can quickly start to get behind the discussions that are occurring on the course discussion board.

9. Go to the discussion board for the class you're taking. Read the daily assignment that the instructor has posted in a message for that day. (This assignment will generally be the same as the assignment for the day that is listed in the manual, however, based on course discussion instructors sometimes add to the assignments in the manual. Always check the assignments posted by the instructor). Each session is clearly labeled with its topic and day. Write a message with your response to the assignment.
10. While you're at the discussion board, read the posts of your classmates. Ask questions about what they've posted. If you disagree with a point someone has made, challenge them—gently and respectfully. Open and honest discussion helps everyone grow and learn.
11. Complete any additional assignments the instructor makes. Usually, there will be at least one written assignment that you will submit directly to the instructor instead of posting on the discussion board. This allows the instructor to give personal and private feedback on the assignment. However, depending on the instructor you may be asked to either post the assignment in a discussion board message, or attach it as a word processor file to an email sent directly to the instructor. Follow the directions of the instructor for how to submit these additional assignments.
12. At the end of the course, PLEASE complete the satisfaction and the post-course surveys. Your feedback is very important in helping us improve future courses.

**Remember: If you have any trouble at all with accessing the online course, the manual, the discussion board, or any other aspect of the online course please contact one of the technical assistants as soon as possible. The sooner you let them know you are having a problem the quicker they can help solve it and prevent you from getting behind. The telephone numbers and email addresses for the two technical assistants are included in the Important Contact Information sheet in the syllabus. If you email the technical assistants please send the message to both to be sure you get the quickest possible response.\***

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\* If you have questions about the specific course content contact the instructor. His or her name will be in the manual along with a phone number and e-mail address. The instructor is there to help you!

# Course Description and Overview

## ***Instructor***

### **Ann V. Denton**

Ann V. Denton is an expert on effective systems and interventions for persons with mental illness, substance abuse, and co-occurring disorders. She has knowledge and experience with system change, evidence-based practices, homelessness and housing issues for people with mental illness and other disabilities. Ms. Denton conducts monitoring site visits for SAMHSA programs, including CSAT and CMHS projects and played a leadership role in the development of SAMHSA's Permanent Supportive Housing Toolkit. Ms. Denton develops training products, leads training teams and provides training and technical assistance to states and communities in many areas, including housing development, funding and implementation of evidence-based practices, permanent supportive housing, services and supports for people with disabilities, and access to mainstream services.

As Director of Substance Abuse and Homeless Services in Travis County, TX, Ms. Denton was responsible for the administration of both residential and outpatient treatment including specialized treatment for individuals with co-occurring disorders; methadone maintenance; counseling and access to housing for people who are HIV+; outreach and engagement services for people who are homeless; a Safe Haven; and intensive outpatient treatment programs.

## ***Course Objectives and Description***

After completing this course, participants will be able to:

- identify and match major sources of federal or state funding for housing to consumer needs
- implement effective advocacy strategies to expand housing resources for people with disabilities
- play a significant role in their community's housing planning processes
- forge alliances with key housing partners

This three-week distance learning course is targeted to staff at Centers for Independent Living working as administrators, housing specialists, advocates, and others concerned with increasing the availability of integrated, affordable, accessible housing for persons with disabilities. A "hands on" course, *Expanding Housing Options for Persons with Disabilities: Housing Advocacy for CILs*, takes an in-depth look at funding sources, housing systems, the community housing planning process, and strategies to make these work better to meet consumer needs. Participants will leave the course with knowledge of the housing resources IN THEIR COMMUNITY, including who the key players are and how to get involved.



## ***Course Materials***

The course utilizes four resources for participant study, activities, and discussion: (a) this syllabus, (b) sections from two training manuals, (c) supplemental materials, and (d) the Internet. The manuals are designed to provide sufficient background information to make it possible for all students to assume an active role in on-line discussions. Additional learning materials may be recommended, but not required, to enhance the participant's understanding of the topic. The syllabus contains the plan and the assignments for each session.

The instructors will be visiting the website daily during the course of this training. Please use the central discussion area as much as possible so others in the training may benefit from your questions and observations. If you need to talk to the instructors privately, use the e-mail message system.

## ***Online Course Expectations and Guidelines***

Here are some expectations and guidelines that will assist you in effective participation and successful completion of the course.

### ***Flexibility and Discipline***

Participants can log on to the course website any hour of the day or night, taking part at times that best fit their schedules. While this "anytime, anywhere" flexibility is convenient, it requires greater than average discipline and does not allow a participant to "coast." There are many deadlines that must be met each week in order to maximize learning and interaction. You are encouraged to post your comments daily as a benefit to both you and your colleagues. This interaction is a major part of the course and is one of the ways that online courses differ from self-study courses. Students are expected to participate in each assignment in order to receive a certificate of completion.

A nice feature of online courses is that you can re-read and review course material or instructor and participant comments as often as you like. You will be able to evaluate course material at your own pace and then respond in a thoughtful and constructive manner. Participants have a greater responsibility for their own learning than they would have in a traditional learning environment.

### ***Communication and Learning***

Online courses work best when classes have 15 or more participants, and they are most effective when there is lively class "discussion." Participants, therefore, are expected to take initiative in communication and interaction. Within the unique on-line environment, the responsibility is on the participant to maintain an open communication link, request clarification, and direct interaction in a way that will serve to increase his or her personal understanding. Even though face-to-face communication is absent, the written discussion of online classes creates entirely new ways of learning—sometimes just different, sometimes even better.



Participants contribute as much to the learning environment as the instructor, whose role becomes one of a colleague and facilitator rather than the director and sole source of knowledge.

On-line programs have been specifically designed to take advantage of technology. We have not attempted to replicate a model that works well in a face-to-face traditional environment. The online delivery method gives you the same results—but in a far more efficient manner. Also remember that in physical classrooms, some participants sit without participating. In the on-line environment, it's a little harder to remain uninvolved.

#### *Time Needed*

Plan to devote an average of one hour per day to your assignments and activities which include accessing lectures, participating in course discussion, completing and submitting assignments, and reading supplementary workshop materials. Once the course begins, you are encouraged to log on every day.

#### *About the Speed of This Workshop*

This three-week workshop moves along surprisingly quickly. We have found that students who devote time every day to the course get the most out of it. Those who fall behind may not receive feedback from the instructor and their peers because the class has moved on to other assignments. If you do fall behind, you should complete the assignments, but be aware that you may not get the same quality of feedback.

#### *IL-Related Assignments*

Discussion at your own organization or work site will enhance the learning experience. Participants are encouraged, but not required, to consult with coworkers prior to completing the assignments.

### ***Participant Achievement Documentation***

A certificate is available from ILRU for those students who log in to class regularly, keep current with assigned readings, complete assignments, participate in the discussions, complete the surveys, and complete the final assignment on time.

### ***Follow-up Survey and Evaluation Summary***

An evaluator may contact you to complete a brief survey designed to assess if you are applying what you learned in this course to the work that you do. The results of this survey will be used to assess the longer term outcomes of the training.

## Course Calendar

October 6	SESSION 1: Introductions, Pre-Course Survey, Educate Yourself on Programs
October 7	SESSION 2: Overview of Housing Resources – Jigsaw Puzzle Pieces
October 8	SESSION 3: Overview of Housing Resources – HOME and Tax Credits
October 9	SESSION 4: Understanding Vouchers
October 10	SESSION 5: Working with the Public Housing Authorities
October 13	SESSION 6: Understanding Tax Credits
October 14	SESSION 7: Working with Tax Credits
October 15	SESSION 8: Your Community's Consolidated Plan Programs
October 16	SESSION 9: Making the Case – Why Resources Should Be Allocated to People with Disabilities
October 17	SESSION 10: Advocacy and Collaboration Strategies – Poverty Argument
October 20	SESSION 11: Advocacy and Collaboration Strategies – Legal Argument
October 21	SESSION 12: Advocacy Strategies – Presenting Your Message
October 22	SESSION 13: Additional Resources
October 23	SESSION 14: Action Plan for Housing – Review What You Know
October 24	SESSION 15: Continuing your Action Plan for Housing & Course Wrap Up

## Course Assignments

### ***Session One: Introductions, Pre-Course Survey, Educate Yourself on Programs***

#### **Plan for Session One**

- Review course structure and requirements.
- Share information about yourself.
- Meet course participants.
- Take the pre-course survey.
- Learn about who controls the money and programs in your state and city.

#### **Assignment**

1. Take the pre-course survey by clicking on Quizzes on the left side in Canvas.
2. Read the course syllabus and overview at the beginning of this document and then pages 5-9 in *Choose, Get, Keep Integrated Community Housing*.
3. Tell us a little about yourself in the "Discussion" area of the course website and then read your colleagues' biographical postings.
4. Using the Internet and/or telephone contact your local community development or housing office and request a copy of your community's Consolidated Plan. You may need to pick it up, have it mailed to you, or download it to your computer. This will be used for several assignments during the class.
5. Review "Summary of Housing Resources Table."
6. Answer the Study Questions below.

#### **Study Questions**

1. Which if any of the funding sources listed in the table have you heard of?
2. Are you aware of organizations in your community that use these funds? If so, what kinds of services do they provide with the funds?

## ***Session Two: Overview of Housing Resources – Jigsaw Puzzle Pieces***

### **Plan for Session Two**

- Understand how the housing industry approaches affordability.
- Obtain detailed information about housing resources, including sources and how the resources are used.

### **Assignment**

1. Read pages 10 – 14 in *Choose, Get, Keep Integrated Community Housing*.
2. Read slides 4 – 18 in *Expanding the Availability of Accessible Housing* PowerPoint.
3. Read pages 36 - 41 in *Choose, Get, Keep Integrated Community Housing*.
4. Complete the study question activities.

### **Study Questions**

1. Look up the Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) in your community. Try [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/pha/contacts](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/pha/contacts)  
Call the PHA and find out if there is a waiting list.
2. Using the telephone, networking, and/or the Internet see if you can find any non-profit housing developers in your community. These include Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs).
3. Post your findings on the course site.

## ***Session Three: Overview of Housing Resources – HOME and Tax Credits***

### **Plan for Session Three**

- Gain an understanding of the HOME Investment Partnerships Program and the Low Income Housing Tax Credits Program.

### **Assignment**

1. Read pages 40 – 44 (HOME) and 13 – 22 (LIHTC) in *Funding Sources Successfully Used by States to Support Development of Integrated, Affordable, and Accessible Community Housing*.
2. Answer the study questions.
3. Obtain a copy or link to your community's Consolidated Plan.
4. Obtain a copy or link to your state's Qualified Allocation Plan.

### **Study Questions**

1. How can the Qualified Allocation Plan be used to help target housing resources to persons with disabilities?
2. Name an allowable activity under HOME that is both underutilized and allows quick access to housing.

## ***Session Four: Understanding Vouchers***

### **Plan for Session Four**

- Learn how vouchers work and how to access them.
- Identify who is eligible for vouchers.

### **Assignment**

3. Read:
  - Part I, Housing Choice Vouchers (pages 4 – 12) in *Funding Sources Successfully Used by States to Support Development of Integrated, Affordable, and Accessible Community Housing*, and
  - Appendix A in *Choose, Get, Keep Integrated Community Housing*.
4. Review “Legal Issues” PowerPoint, slides 21 – 43.
5. Answer the Study Questions.

### **Study Questions**

1. Name two sources of housing vouchers (you may have to look back to Session 2 PowerPoints).
2. Describe a situation in which you would ask for a reasonable accommodation for a person applying to the Housing Choice Voucher program.

## ***Session Five: Working with the Public Housing Authorities***

### **Plan for Session Five**

- Become familiar with Public Housing Authority plans.
- Learn about how the information in these plans can help you understand and gain access to these resources.

### **Assignment**

1. Go to <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/index.cfm>. This is HUD’s site for PHA plans. Click on “approved plans.” Find the approved PHA plan for Hay Springs, Nebraska for Fiscal Year Beginning (FYB) 2009 (dated October, 2008).
2. Answer the study questions.

### **Study Questions**

1. Answer these questions about the Hay Springs PHA plan: how many households could be served in the coming fiscal year? How many in public housing? How many in the Housing Choice Voucher (formerly known as Section 8) program?
2. Does this PHA's plan set aside units for people with disabilities?
3. Looking at the section titled "Supporting Documents Available for Review," name two that might be of particular interest to persons with disabilities.
4. Bonus question: In the supporting documents section, why doesn't this PHA have a Section 8 (HCV) grievance procedure?
5. Using the skills you have learned here, look up a housing authority serving your community and answer the same questions.

## ***Session Six: Understanding Tax Credits***

### **Plan for Session Six**

- Learn how tax credits work and how to access them.
- Identify who is eligible for tax credits.

### **Assignment**

1. Read Slides 1-19 in *Using Tax Credits to Expand Housing for People with Disabilities* PowerPoint.
2. Locate your Housing Finance Agency; find the Qualified Allocation Plan for Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Obtain a copy of the plan through the Internet or by picking one up.
3. Answer the Study Questions.

### **Study Questions**

1. Are people with disabilities included in the Qualified Allocation Plan?
2. Is accessibility or Universal Design included in your state plan? Does your state provide points for projects that set aside units for persons with disabilities?

## ***Session Seven: Working with Tax Credits***

### **Plan for Session Seven**

- Become more familiar with Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) Properties.
- Consider examples from other states.
- Learn what to ask for.

### **Assignment**

1. Read Slides 20-51 in the *Using Tax Credits to Expand Housing for People with Disabilities* PowerPoint.
2. Call or visit the website for the State Housing Finance Agency for your state. Using the telephone or Internet, make contact to find out if they keep a list of projects that were awarded Low Income Housing Tax Credits.
3. Identify up to three tax credit properties in your community; call the property and collect eligibility information from the management office. This includes whether it is an elderly or family project, income levels needed to qualify, and rent for an average unit
4. Answer the Study Questions.

### **Study Questions**

1. What were the rents at the LIHTC properties? Are they affordable to someone who lives on SSI and/or SSDI?
2. What ideas do you have for making the LIHTC program in your state more usable for persons with disabilities?

## ***Session Eight: Your Community's Consolidated Plan Programs***

### **Plan for Session Eight**

- Become familiar with HOME Investments Partnership Program, Community Development Block Grants, the Supportive Housing Program, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS.

### **Assignment**

1. Read slides 19 - 32 in the *Housing Funding Options* PowerPoint.
2. Answer the Study Questions.

### **Study Questions**

1. Using the ConPlan you obtained earlier, explain how your community plans to spend money in these programs.
2. Are there provisions for people with disabilities in your community's Consolidated Plan? What are they?
3. Given what you know about the needs in your community, name three requests you can make of decision makers that would make housing more available for people with disabilities.



## ***Session Nine: Making the Case – Why Resources Should Be Allocated to People with Disabilities***

### **Plan for Session Nine**

- Learn about poverty and the lack of affordable housing.
- Find data about your housing market.

### **Assignment**

1. Review *Priced Out in 2012* (Technical Assistance Collaborative – <http://www.tacinc.org/media/33368/PricedOut2012.pdf>)
2. Write a paragraph describing how easy or hard it would be for a person on an SSI income to afford a one-bedroom apartment in your community. Post it.
3. Answer the Study Questions.

### **Study Questions**

1. How is HUD's Extremely Low Income (ELI) category defined?
2. How many communities in the U.S. have one-bedroom fair market rents that EXCEED an SSI income?

## ***Session Ten: Advocacy and Collaboration Strategies – Poverty Argument***

### **Plan for Session Ten**

- Gain an understanding of advocacy and collaboration strategies.
- Learn how to make the “poverty” argument.

### **Assignment**

1. Review slides 20 -25 in *Expanding the Availability of Accessible Housing* PowerPoint.
2. Answer the Study Questions.

### **Study Questions**

1. True or false – “Designating funds to low income households is the same as targeting households at or below the poverty level.” Explain.
2. Using the poverty argument, write a paragraph advocating for a set aside of resources for people with disabilities in your community's ConPlan.

## ***Session Eleven: Advocacy and Collaboration Strategies – Legal Argument***

### **Plan for Session Eleven**

- Learn how to make the legal argument.

### **Assignment**

1. Look at slides 27-37 “Collaboration Strategies” in the *Expanding the Availability of Accessible Housing* PowerPoint.
2. Answer the Study Questions.

### **Study Questions**

1. Thinking about the work that your organization does, how do housing laws (Fair Housing, ADA, Section 504) inform, expand or protect your mission?
2. Write a paragraph making the legal case for allocating housing resources to people with disabilities. Post it.

## ***Session Twelve: Advocacy – Presenting your Message***

### **Plan for Session Twelve**

- Learn how to use the information you have to assess needs.
- Identify where to look for information.
- Understand how to present your “wants” in a way that helps policy makers and program directors meet their goals.

### **Assignment**

1. Review *A Fair Share: Making the Case to Decision Makers* document and the paragraphs you wrote in Sessions Ten and Eleven.
2. Develop sample testimony making three key points including the need for housing and targeting specific resources. E-mail your work to the instructor.
3. Answer the Study Question.

### **Study Question**

- How many people with disabilities have need for affordable housing in your community? (How many people with disabilities are on SSI in your community? How many people are enrolled in waivers? Are on waiting lists? Are on the local PHA lists (if they keep a separate list)? Etc.)

## ***Session Thirteen: Additional Resources***

### **Plan for Session Thirteen**

- Learn about the Technical Assistance Collaborative, Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities, National Low Income Housing Coalition, and other resources for public policy and affordable housing.

### **Assignment**

1. Using the Internet, go to the websites for Technical Assistance Collaborative and National Low Income Housing Coalition.
2. On the TAC website, locate information about vouchers for “non-elderly people with disabilities.” What is this? Write and post a short paragraph.
3. On the NLIHC website, locate the “Advocates Guide” and review the Table of Contents. How can you use this resource?

## ***Session Fourteen: Action Plan for Housing – Review What You Know***

### **Plan for Session Fourteen**

- Review what you know.
- Articulate what you want.
- Identify resources.
- Determine how you will make your case.

### **Assignment**

1. Begin developing a housing plan for your community, using the Planning Template provided as a sample.
2. Make a list of what you want for your community.
3. Match each item on the list to a specific housing resource.
4. Brainstorm ideas for how to make an effective case to get what you want.

## ***Session Fifteen: Continuing your Action Plan for Housing and Course Wrap Up***

### **Plan for Session Fifteen**

- Review your coursework.
- Make a timeline.
- Consider your next steps.
- Complete the post-course and satisfaction surveys.

**Assignment**

1. Take the post-course and satisfaction surveys by clicking on Quizzes on the left side in Canvas.
2. Continue developing your housing plan.
3. Make a timeline that shows when and where you can advocate for your community "wants." Add any additional steps, like gathering more information or meeting with stakeholders, to the timeline.
4. Go back to your sample testimony from Session Twelve and revise it with your new knowledge.
5. Identify three immediate next steps you will take to make the dream of housing real for persons with disabilities.
6. Answer the Study Questions.

**Study Questions**

1. Review your coursework. What has been most relevant? Most useful?
2. Did you find any of the discussion to be NOT useful?